

## J.J. Keller & Associates



J. J. Keller & Associates, Inc., located in Neenah, Wisconsin, was established in 1953 and has become the nation's leader in risk and regulatory management solutions. The company employs over 1,100 associates and serves nearly 350,000 customers, including more than 90% of the Fortune 1,000. J. J. Keller's diverse products and services include publications, forms, training, supplies, software, consulting, online management tools, outsourced services, and mobile technology. Major market segments served include transportation and workplace safety.

### eBusiness Challenge

Requirements had already existed from a previous version of project, so a thorough requirements definition phase that typically precedes a major design wasn't possible. Tying in the previous work with a targeted two-week workshop session gave Ascendant fresh insight in how both Information Technology and the Business divisions performed their jobs. Through Atech's IDEA™ methodology with Agile at its core (a series of process accelerators and industry vertical experience) Ascendant was able to quickly understand the needs of stakeholders and lay out a iterative success plan for rapid implementation. This was accomplished by linking in the main business stakeholders into a collaborative implementation project thru a series of rapid sprints that allowed for reduced project risk and transparency into the development process.

Ascendant also worked hand-in-hand with a 3rd party Agency, gaining buy-in on the needs of the design without sacrificing the quality of the creative comps.

What was needed was a shared vision that was agreed to by all parties.

The Solution Plan identified the following goals

- Increase visitor traffic through natural search improvements.

- Increase conversion rate through usability enhancements.
- Raise average order size through cross-sells & on-site marketing.
- Improve site stability and maintenance.

### The Challenge

- Utilize a back-end system that automated the tasks of content management and catalog changes.
- Create a system that could create and store a customized experience for visitors seeking to purchase product.
- Improve the navigation and allow visitors to access relevant and related products.
- Streamline site content tools and integrate the entire system into current systems.
- Build a multi channel platform for future iterations of the website that can be easily and quickly uploaded.
- Get the implementation right on the first try, ready to launch.
- Minimize the work time for Information Technology in making changes, without affecting site performance or structure with unauthorized architecture changes.
- Launch the site on time and on budget.

### Key Technology Changes

- Set site wide standards for to insure interoperability and SOA.
- Implement a standards based Java platform with a framework that allows for easier upgrades and maintenance.
- Add features and capabilities that can be added after site launch.
- Integrate to legacy backend systems for process improvements.

### The Strategy

A set of requirements already existed from a previous version of project, so the exhaustive requirements definition that usually precedes a major design wasn't possible. Tying in the previous work with targeted 2 week workshop sessions gave us fresh insight in how both Information Technology and the Business divisions performed their jobs. Through a series of process accelerators and industry vertical experience, Ascendant was able to quickly understand the needs of stakeholders and lay out a roadmap for fast technical implementation.

Ascendant also worked closely with a 3rd party creative time, gaining buy-in on the needs of the design without sacrificing the quality of the creative comps.

What was needed was a shared vision that was agreed to by all parties.

The requirements gathering process ultimately identified the following goals

- Increase visitor traffic through natural search improvements
- Increase conversion rate through usability enhancements.
- Raise average order size through cross-sells & on-site marketing.
- Improve site stability and maintenance

**Technical Solution**

Upgrade the technology platforms to IBM WebSphere Commerce version 7.

IBM WebSphere Commerce is designed to enable deployment and management of multiple e-commerce sites through a single, unified platform, thereby maximizing performance, scalability and adaptability.

**Key Product Benefits**

- Precision Marketing (Ascendant co-authored RedBook)
- Multi-channel integration (online, kiosk, mobile, call center)
- Ability to handle different business models (B2B, B2C, B2B2C)
- Extensive marketing and merchandising capabilities
- Personalized content and pricing
- Scalable and reliable platform
- Content management integration

The CrossView Web Store speeds and simplifies the development, deployment and management of e-commerce sites while maximizing performance, scalability and adaptability. It has significant out-of-the-box features and complete flexibility for customizations to support your specific cross-channel business needs. Ascendant Technology is currently the exclusive implementers of Crossview.

**The Result**  
*From the JJ Keller Press Release*

The company’s website was rebuilt with more advanced features to make it easier for visitors to quickly find and order the products they need, as well as stay on top of breaking safety and regulatory news.

*“After reaching out to our customers, we were able to plan a focused redesign that addressed their needs,”* said Adrienne Hartman, Corporate E-Commerce Manager. *“The retooled site offers an improved shopping experience and quicker access to information and solutions.”* The revamped JJKeller.com sorts information based on area of interest, featuring timely news articles, relevant resources, and key products for each area. Visitors can narrow products by type, as well as compare products side-by-side.

In addition, the redesigned site allows visitors to create and manage an online account to streamline the order process. It also provides J. J. Keller’s largest clients with customized buying experiences.

*“Our primary objective is to make it easier for our customers to do their jobs,”* Hartman said.

Marketing details like promo codes and select customer status were significantly enhanced, including content and additional marketing opportunities to Diamond level customers. This dynamic approach to customer management ensured the right message delivered to the right customer based on their unique profiles. That information was then tracked through popular metrics programs and marketing software.

**What Worked?**

The site was delivered on time and on budget.

Excellent collaboration, a single product owner with the ability to make decisions, and a great team ready to implement new skills made the project succeed. Of note is that this was the first time JJ Keller used any type of Agile methodology, a not so simple task they took on with enthusiasm. The resulting site is simple and keeps the end consumer in mind.

The site is easier to navigate, easier to maintain, and visitors can find products faster and more intuitively. The site simply works, and is designed for easier upgrades and changes in future years.

*“With the re-launch of jkkeller.com on WebSphere Commerce v7, their e-Commerce team has been empowered with advanced site management tools that will allow them to promote their brands and products and interact with their customers on an entirely new level,”* said Sean Wyrick, Atech e-Commerce BUE. *“The new system will also bring improved performance and scalability thanks to the market leading IBM WebSphere Commerce platform.”*

Mentioned several times in the requirements was the need to deliver the site on time. Ascendant had a hard date to hit based on a business calendar, and the site was delivered by that date. The effort required constant collaboration and education from all sides to prioritize features, functions and fixes for release.

Upon completion, one of the project managers mentioned that this was one of the most non-“eventful” go live events in 15 years of doing IT projects. That’s a testament to a well-planned, well-tested, well-coordinated design. That is what Ascendant delivers.